

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified application, in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-25 were previously pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 14-15, 17-18, 21-22, and 25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have amended claims 4-5, 12, 16, 19-20, and 23-24 herein. Applicants submit that support for these amendments may be found throughout the specification, for example in Figs. 15, 17, 18C, and 18D and the corresponding discussion in the specification. Moreover, Applicants submit that no new matter has been entered by way of this amendment. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-identified application, in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-16, 18-20, 22, 23 and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,699,525 to Embutsu, et al. (“Embutsu”), in view of US Patent 6,633,795 to Suzuki, et al. (“Suzuki”). Claims 17, 21 and 25 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Suzuki, in view of Embutsu. Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly being unpatentable over Embutsu as applied to claim 1, and further in view of US Patent No. 6,321,983, to Katayanagi, et al. (“Katayanagi”). Claims 1-3, 14-15, 17-18, 21-22 and 25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 4, 12, 19-20 and 23-24, as well as the claims directly or indirectly dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited reference.

1. Amended independent claim 4 recites, *inter alia*:

An environmental information system comprising...a raw material environmental information storage means for storing environmental information about an amount of hazardous substance included in the raw materials; and

integrated environmental information forming means for forming integrated environmental information including total amount of the hazardous substance with respect to each product...

Applicants submit that neither Embutsu, nor Suzuki disclose, teach or suggest the elements recited in amended independent claim 4.

The Examiner alleges Embutsu discloses, “a raw material environmental information storage section for storing environmental information about the raw materials [citing] (Col. 6, lines 9-12, i.e., data is stored in correspondence to location information or geographic information....” Applicants submit that Embutsu’s waste management system is directed to managing information, wherein the “content of information is specifically the type or kind an quantity of home electric appliances, the time of sale or collection, and the location of sale or collection.” (See, Embutsu, Col. 5, lines 41-49). As such, Applicants submit Embutsu does not teach, disclose or suggest at least “forming the amount of hazardous substance of each of the raw materials as environmental information” as recited in amended independent claim 4.

Furthermore, Applicants submit that Suzuki does not remedy the deficiency identified in Embutsu discussed above. Instead, Suzuki in Fig. 5 illustrates a statutory regulation/standard information database 35. This database 35 contains information related to the “statutory regulations and the standards concerning the sales of manufactured articles, discarded articles, and discarded article processings or treatments in various countries...” (See, Suzuki, Col. 35, lines 21-24). However, Applicants submit that Suzuki does not teach, disclose, or suggest at least “forming the amount of hazardous substance of each of the raw materials as

environmental information", as recited in amended independent claim 4.

Therefore, Applicants submit the "amount of hazardous substance of each of the raw materials as environmental information, recited in independent claim 4 is patentably distinct from both Embutsu's geographical information and Suzuki's statutory hazardous substance information, taken alone or in combination. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claims 4, 19 and 23 are patentably distinct from the cited references for at least this reason. Further, Applicants submit that claims 5-11, which are directly or indirectly dependent on amended independent claim 4 are also patentably distinct from the cited references for at least this reason. Therefore Applicants request withdrawal of this ground of rejections.

2. Amended independent claim 12 recites, *inter alia*:

An environmental information system comprising: an environmental information storage means for storing environmental information including information about whether or not raw materials of a product include a chemical substance to be environmentally at least one of prohibited and reduced...

Applicants submit that neither Suzuki, nor Embutsu disclose, teach or suggest the elements recited in amended independent claim 12.

As discussed above, Embutsu simply discloses geographical or location-related data. Furthermore, as discussed above, Suzuki discloses statutory regulations and standards related to the sales of manufactured articles. However, Applicants submit that neither Embutsu, nor Suzuki teach, disclose or suggest, "including information about whether or not raw materials of a product include a chemical substance to be environmentally at least one of prohibited and reduced" as recited in amended independent claim 12.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that for at least this reason amended

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independent claims 12, 20 and 24, as well as claims 13 and 16 which are dependent on independent claim 12, are patentably distinct from Embutsu and Suzuki, taken either alone or in combination. Therefore, Applicants request withdrawal of this ground of rejections.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Embutsu, et al. as applied to claim 1 above and further in view of US Patent No. 6,321,983 to Katayanagi, et al. ("Katayanagi, et al."). Applicants respectfully submit that claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection has been rendered moot and Applicants request withdrawal of this ground of rejection.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented herein are allowable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below, should that in anyway facilitate prosecution.

Applicants believe no fee nor extension of time is required for this filing. However, should an extension of time be necessary to render this filing timely, such extension is hereby petitioned and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this paper, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4736

Respectfully submitted,
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